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REMARKS

Claims 2, 9-11, and 17 are canceled without prejudice to their continued prosecution in a continuation and/or divisional application.

The amendments to the specification and to claims 12 and 14 were made for clarification.

The amendments to independent claim 1 are fully supported by the description in the specification (e.g., page 8, lines 14-16; page 8, line 31 to page 9, line 1; etc.) and by the drawings (e.g., FIGS. 3, 5, 8; etc.).

New dependent claims 22-26 are fully supported by the description in the specification (e.g., page 8, lines 10-19; page 9, lines 7-21; etc.) and by the drawings (e.g., FIGS. 5, 6, 8, etc.).

No new matter has been added. Upon entry of this Response, claims 1, 3-8, 12-16, and 22-26 are present and active in the application.

Response to Restriction Requirement/Election

Responsive to the Restriction Requirement, Applicant hereby confirms the telephonic election without traverse of the claims of Group I (i.e., claims 1-17).

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

The rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite has been obviated by amendment. Accordingly, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. The rejection of claims 2, 9-11, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Campbell et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,168,914 B1) has been rendered moot by the cancellation of these claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

2. The rejection of claims 1, 3-6, 8, 12, 14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Campbell et al.* has been obviated by amendment.

As presently written, independent claim 1 recites that "the second connector comprises a rib-like convexity circumscribing the second region, and...the first connector comprises a concavity configured to engage the convexity," which is neither taught nor suggested by *Campbell et al.*

Campbell et al. describes a system for combinatorial synthesis. Even if the outermost wells **30** of adjacent plates **24** shown in FIG. 4 are regarded as convexities and concavities in the sense of the claimed invention, as argued in the Office Action (e.g., page 6), *Campbell et al.* contains no teaching or suggestion that "the second connector comprises a rib-like convexity circumscribing the second region, and...the first connector comprises a concavity configured to engage the convexity," as required by independent claim 1.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is neither anticipated by nor would have been obvious in view of *Campbell et al.* Accordingly, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The rejection of claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Campbell et al.*, the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Campbell et al.* in view of *Fernwood et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,493,815), and the rejection of claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Campbell et al.* in view of *Hinckley* (U.S. Patent No. 4,833,087) have been obviated by amendment.

As presently written, independent claim 1 recites that "the second connector comprises a rib-like convexity circumscribing the second region, and...the first connector comprises a concavity configured to engage the convexity," which is neither taught nor suggested by *Campbell et al.*, *Fernwood et al.* or *Hinckley*.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is neither anticipated by nor would have been obvious in view of *Campbell et al.*, *Fernwood et al.*

or *Hinckley*, individually or in combination. Accordingly, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

New Claims

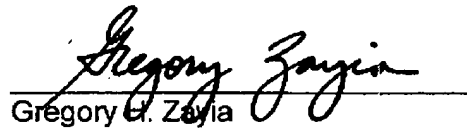
Each of new dependent claims 22-26 depends from independent claim 1. Inasmuch as independent claim 1 is neither anticipated by nor would have been obvious in view of *Campbell et al.*, *Fernwood et al.* or *Hinckley*, individually or in combination, as explained above, Applicant respectfully submits that new dependent claims 22-26 are likewise allowable as presently written.

Conclusion

In view of the Amendment and Remarks set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is in condition for allowance. Early notification to such effect is earnestly solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that the above Amendment and Remarks do not put the claims in condition to be allowed, and that a discussion would be helpful to advance prosecution, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned agent directly at (312)-321-4257.

Respectfully submitted,


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